# RANKED <br> CHOICE VOTING 

## TABULATION

 WORKSHOP TOOLKIT SINGLE-WINNER RACEARLINGTON
VIRGINIA


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## TABULATION WORKSHOP TOOLKIT

## About this Toolkit

This Toolkit is a guide for community members to conduct workshops to help explain ranked choice voting tabulation. The Toolkit is specifically designed for contests where 1 candidate wins. Using this Toolkit, a workshop facilitator can lead participants through a hand tally of a pre-marked deck of ranked choice ballots.

The facilitator should have a strong understanding of ranked choice voting tabulation and be able to explain terms like election threshold and skipped ranking. Participants should have a basic understanding of what ranked choice voting is and how to mark a ballot.

The workshop is designed to be run with small groups of 1 to 10 participants and takes 15 to 20 minutes to complete. It is ideally suited for fairs or farmer markets.

## Activity Summary (1-10 Participants)

Participants will hand tally a pre-marked deck of ranked choice ballots.

## Learning Objectives

Participants will gain a deeper understanding of how ranked choice voting ballots are tabulated.

## Supplies Needed

Included in Toolkit:

- Pre-marked ballots (24 total)
- 5 candidate tent labels
- RCV Formulas \& Terms Sheet
- Blank Tally Sheet

Not Included in Toolkit:

- Calculator
- Small dry erase/chalk board
- Dry erase markers/chalk/pens


## THE BASICS

Background information for facilitator.

## What is Ranked Choice Voting?

Ranked choice voting (RCV) is a voting method in which voters rank candidates in order of preference (1st choice, 2nd choice, 3rd choice). Ranking multiple candidates allows you to still have a choice in who gets elected even if your top choice candidate does not win.

## Why is Arlington Implementing Ranked Choice Voting?

The Virginia General Assembly passed a bill to amend Code of Virginia § 24.2673.1 in July 2020 to allow localities to implement ranked choice voting in elections of members of a county board of supervisors or a city council. In fall 2021, the Arlington Electoral Board conducted public engagement with a Q\&A session, a "mock election," and held a joint work session with the County Board to discuss this method of voting. In December 2022, the Arlington County Board adopted the use of ranked choice voting for the June 20, 2023 County Board primary election, making Arlington the first locality in Virginia to implement ranked choice voting. In December 2023, the Arlington County Board adopted the use of ranked choice voting in all future County Board primary elections.

## How RCV Ballots are Counted

All 1st choice votes are counted. If no candidate receives the required number of votes to win, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and ballots for that candidate are transferred to the voter's next choice. This process continues until a candidate has enough votes to win.

If your 1st choice candidate is eliminated, your vote is transferred to your 2nd choice candidate. If your 2 nd choice candidate is eliminated, your vote is then transferred to your 3rd choice candidate.

The number of votes needed to win, also called the election threshold, is determined using a formula as per Virginia Administrative Code 1VAC20-100-10. When a single seat is open, this means that a candidate must receive more than $50 \%$ of the votes. (Total number of votes cast is divided by 2 ( 1 seat +1 ) or $1 / 2$ of the votes). Once a candidate receives $50 \%$ of the votes, tabulation ends.

## SET UP

Set up five candidate tent signs to help sort ballots. Place the signs in the order they appear on the ballot.

Prepare the Tally Sheet (page 8) or dry erase or chalk board.

Provide copies of RCV Formulas \& Term Sheets (page 11) to participants.

Assign Roles. Depending on the number of participants, some might be asked to do all or 1 role.

1. Caller - Calls out how ballots are marked and distributes them to counters.
2. Counter - Assigned to one or more flavors. Receives ballots from caller. Counts ballots marked for their flavor.
3. Recorder - Records the number of ballots for each flavor as ballots are tabulated across rounds on the Tally Sheet.

## RUNNING THE WORKSHOP

Facilitators can read prompts in gray boxes.

Arlington County implemented Ranked Choice Voting for its County Board Race in the June 20, 2023 Democratic Primary for the first time. In December 2023, the Arlington County Board approved the use of Ranked Choice Voting in all future County Board primary elections.

Together, we're going to hand tally a stack of ballots so we can see how ranked choice ballots are counted in a single-winner RCV election.

Ranked Choice Voting is tabulated in rounds - with 1st choice votes counted first. 2nd and 3 rd choice votes are only counted if a 1 st choice candidate is eliminated. Before we can begin tabulating the results, we first need to calculate the election threshold, which is the total number of votes needed to win.*

Using the RCV formula sheet, let's calculate the election threshold needed to win a 1winner RCV race.

First, the group should count the total number of ballots in the deck.

There should be 24 total ballots in the deck.

Next, using the RCV formula sheet the group should calculate the election threshold.

- Election Threshold $=13$
*Virginia Administrative Code 1VAC20-100-10

Now that we know how many votes are needed to be elected, we can start counting the ballots by sorting them into the corresponding candidate stacks.

Remember, we count 1st choice rankings FIRST!

Group should now sort ballots into the appropriate candidate stacks based on the candidate ranked in the first rank column.

Now that all of the 1st choice rankings have been sorted into their stack, lets count the ballots in each stack and tally how many votes each candidate has.

Group should count the number of ballots in each stack and the participants keeping track of the tally should write the vote totals for each candidate under the Round 1 column on the tally sheet. If you're working with a large group, you can assign each participant a candidate to tally.

Correct totals can be verified using the Results Sheet (page 8).

Now that we've counted all the votes for each candidate - has any candidate reached the threshold required to win?

If no candidate has reached the required threshold of votes, we need to eliminate the candidate with the least number of votes and redistribute those ballots to the next ranked candidate.

Also, keep an eye out for ballots that may have a skipped ranking. These ballots may still count!

Have participants determine which candidate should be eliminated and where the 2nd ranked votes from the eliminated candidate will be redistributed.

Now, let's count the stacks of ballots again and see if a candidate has reached the threshold to win. If no candidate has reached the threshold, we'll eliminate the candidate with the least number of votes.

This process should be repeated until a candidate reaches or exceeds the election threshold, making the candidate the winner!

Election Threshold:

|  | Round 1 |  | Round 2 | Round 3 |
| :---: | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Sugar Cookies |  |  |  |  |
| Prand 4 |  |  |  |  |
| Prine Blondies |  |  |  |  |
| Oatmeal |  |  |  |  |
| Chocolate Chip |  |  |  |  |
| Cookies |  |  |  |  |
| Sticky Toffee |  |  |  |  |
| Pudding |  |  |  |  |

## Results

Election Threshold: 13

|  | Round 1 | Round 2 | Round 3 | Round 4 |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Sugar Cookies | 4 | 4 | 4 |  |
| Praline Blondies | 6 | 8 | 10 |  |
| Oatmeal <br> Chocolate Chip <br> Cookies | 9 | 9 | 10 | 13 |
| Sticky Toffee <br> Pudding | 6 |  |  |  |

# ә!ㅣㅓ00 de6ns <br> <br> Sugar Cookies 

 <br> <br> Sugar Cookies}


## 

## Sticky Toffee Pudding

## solumodg

+1
$\frac{\text { \# of ballots cast for office }}{\# \text { of candidates to be elected }+1}$

Election Threshold = (rounded down to a whole number) a a whole number)

Ballot that counts toward an active candidate
Ballot that counts toward an active candidate in the current round of counting. Inactive Ballot
Ballot that can no longer be counted due to
the ballot having no active candidates in the
round.

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- If you make a mistake or need assistance, ask an election officer.

| Arlington's Favorite Sweet Treat One treat will win. <br> Mark no more than 1 oval in each column |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Sugar Cookie | - | $\bigcirc$ | , |
| Praline Blondies | $\bigcirc$ | 0 | 0 |
| Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookie | O | - | , |
| Sticky Toffee Pudding | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ | P |
| Brownies |  | $\bigcirc$ | , |

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| Praline Blondies | $\bigcirc$ |  | $\bigcirc$ |
| Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookie | - | O | O |
| Sticky Toffee Pudding | $\bigcirc$ | 0 | - |
| Brownies |  | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ |

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| Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookie |  |  | O |
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|  | 1 | 2 | 3 |
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| Praline Blondies | $\bigcirc$ |  | $\bigcirc$ |
| Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookie |  | O | ) |
| Sticky Toffee Pudding | $\bigcirc$ | 0 | - |
| Brownies |  | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ |

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| Praline Blondies | $\bigcirc$ | 0 | 0 |
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| Sticky Toffee Pudding | $\bigcirc$ |  | 0 |
| Brownies | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ |

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| Praline Blondies | $\bigcirc$ | 0 | $\bigcirc$ |
| Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookie | - | 0 | $\bigcirc$ |
| Sticky Toffee Pudding | O | 0 | 0 |
| Brownies | O | $\bigcirc$ | - |

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| Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookie | - | O | $\bigcirc$ |
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| Brownies | O | $\bigcirc$ | - |

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| Sticky Toffee Pudding | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ | , |
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- To select a 3 rd choice, fill in the oval under the number 3 to the right of the candidate's name.

- If you make a mistake or need assistance, ask an election officer.

| Arlington's Favorite Sweet Treat One treat will win. <br> Mark no more than 1 oval in each column |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Sugar Cookie | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ |
| Praline Blondies |  |  | $\bigcirc$ |
| Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookie | ) | 0 | $\bigcirc$ |
| Sticky Toffee Pudding | $\bigcirc$ | - | $\bigcirc$ |
| Brownies | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ | - |

